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ABSTRACT

The University of Guelph Rural Development Outreach Project (RDOP) as it was conceived, organized and utilized in rural communities in Ontario is the major focus of this document; the concluding sections describe some of the problems of Outreach implementation and suggest some possible courses for continuing and expanding the project. There is discussion of: the responsibility of institutions of higher education to help areas deal more effectively with problems within their jurisdiction; the background of the RDOP; Outreach activity groups; the philosophy governing development of a rural outreach program; the program's initial scope and perceived organizational structure, process, and facilities; and the early development, organization, and implementation of RDOP. Next is a description of the pilot projects at Huron (a rural-traditional area), Halton (adjacent to Metropolitan Toronto and experiencing extensive overspill), and Moose Factory Island (which needed an action plan for the provision of water and sewage). The report highlights benefits derived from RDOP by both the pilot communities and the university and points out the constraints which had to be overcome. The final section emphasizes that an expanded Outreach program will require increased commitment from both university and the government and a redefinition and refinement of the community's role. (CM)

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THE GUELPH RURAL DEVELOPMENT OUTREACH PROJECT:

A CANADIAN EXPERIENCE

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THE GUELPH RURAL DEVELOPMENT OUTREACH PROJECT

INTRODUCTION

Early in the 1970's a small self-selected group began negotiations for the creation of a rural development program to be centred at Guelph. It would not be until 1974 that a formal University committee would be struck to develop a proposal to be forwarded to the Kellogg Foundation which resulted in the formation of the Rural Development Outreach Project (RDOP) in 1976.

It was the belief of those advocating a rural Outreach program at Guelph that the university had a responsibility to give leadership in the evolvement of a more comprehensive and integrated approach to rural development in the province and that the University of Guelph and its faculties were in a particularly advantageous position to help facilitate the evolvement of such a program.

The Role of the University

Formal, higher education is a primary state responsibility in industrialized societies which implies some measure of public accountability. Educational institutions, like so many others, however, do not remain static as society evolves. They change and are modified so as to incorporate the prevailing ideologies and values, in order to deal more effectively with problems within their jurisdiction and to meet new forms of public accountability.

In relation to the area of our interest -- the rural component of society -- North American institutions of higher learning have undergone

important modifications. The university evolved in the "old world" as a mainly elitist and exclusive institution. In North America over the last 100 years, first under the aegis of government and later within the private sector, several steps towards the "democratization" of higher education can be documented. This is reflected in the inclusion of such "mundane" subjects as agriculture, the mechanical arts, home science or economics, into the university curriculum. Another step in the same direction was the establishment of formal means of diffusion of research findings to the lay population as may be demonstrated by the agricultural extension systems.

Undoubtedly, the theoretical thinking that informed the organizational structure of these research and learning institutions was the "centre-periphery" model (Schon, 1971:80 - 115), closely related to the concept of "diffusion of innovation". (Rogers, 1967:68). These frameworks informed both domestic and international institution building efforts in the area of agricultural and rural development.

In recent decades, these institutional innovations came under increasing attack for no longer serving their original "democratizing" function of education. Of agricultural research it was said that it served only a select minority-- the modern, commercial farmers and the agri-business complex -- who represent only a fraction of the rural population. Also, because of agriculture's isolated development pattern[1], it never attained its potential contribution to societal development (Mayer and Mayer, 1974: 83-95). The social sciences, by defining rural problems in technological rather than socio-political terms, were said to support the "status quo" and to deflect the rural populations' attention from legitimate avenues of public

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[1] In the Land Grant Colleges of the U.S.A., for example, it developed separately from the Social Sciences.

participation in decision making, thereby neglecting the creation of local power centres and grass-roots mechanisms, needed for democratic participation in society.

It is noteworthy that during the same historic period in which higher education underwent "democratizing" transformations, the justification of science in North America, as a publicly supported activity, moved from a directly relevant and practical notion to one of "pure" and self-justifying conceptualization of science. The professionalization of science activities contributed greatly to the perceived gap and conflict between the "pure" and "applied" traditions and the status differential between their practitioners (Daniels, 1967: 1699-1705). In general, a too narrow conception of the university's knowledge producing functions[1] and the "inward" looking orientations of academic disciplines (Campbell, 1969: 328-48)[2] brought about a questioning of the university's purpose and pressures to broaden the traditional conception of its functions. Not only are teaching, research and other university functions in publicly supported institutions asked to become more "relevant" by government, the private sector and the general population, but there exist many instances of efforts toward the establishment of more direct university/non-university community interaction, in which the latter's contribution, beside the

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1. For example, Churchman (1974: 190-99) distinguishes between "esoteric" (academic) and "exoteric" (socially usefull) knowledge, for which there is a great need. There is an increasing impatience with the long feedback loop that "esoteric" (academic knowledge) has to transverse before it can become socially useful.

2. The academic orientation of disciplinarians leads them to do research and to publish for each other, sometimes with a complete oblivion of society outside of one's own disciplinary group.

provision of funds, become explicitly recognized as a contribution to the common fund of knowledge[1].

Present pressures on learning institutions are not only for a greater sharing and exchange of information, but also to demystify and democratize at least part of the very process of knowledge generation. Participatory research -- for long practiced with industry, business and government -- is now being gradually extended to individuals, groups and communities in a common effort toward improving various aspects of the quality of people's lives.

In recent decades, the universities have responded variously to these pressures. The organizational model which informs the present efforts is one of "functional learning systems" (Schon, 1971), which appears to supercede the "centre-periphery" model on which the universities were previously built. This new model appears equally effective in supporting the existing valuable university functions -- the production of scientific knowledge -- as well as in enabling the institution to meet the emerging challenges of new accountability demands through the production of "socially useful knowledge". In the long run, it may assure the institution's healthy survival by securing ongoing external support. The implementation of this model requires changes. But wherever changes occur, they naturally create distrust, resistance, ambiguity and conflict. Old

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1. Churchman states that "not only do other organizations and people produce socially useful knowledge, but they also produce useful methods of inquiry into organizational problems. These methods differ from the "esoteric" (essentially academic) methods of hypothesis testing and validation, but they are just as reliable." The expanded university work "encompasses the whole production system of socially useful knowledge". (1974: 196).

established and proven structures yield only reluctantly to innovations. Perhaps the most threatening situations emerge, when the entry of a new organizational model appears to question and displace established values and functions.

The University of Guelph is no exception to this trend. The creation of the RDOP with its rural development "outlook" emphasis at the University is the introduction of a new university model and brings with it all the symptoms of institutional change.

In this paper we shall endeavour to discuss the Guelph RDOP experience as it was conceived and later organized and as it unfolded in the rural communities. In the concluding part of this paper we shall turn our attention to some of the problems of "Outreach" implementation and to the benefits we have reaped from these activities. All too often problems of interdisciplinary cooperation and field work are explained in personality terms. We prefer to examine them in connection with the organizational structure of the university and the professional orientations of the disciplines. To conclude, we suggest some possible courses of action for the university, if "Outreach" is to be continued and expanded.

Background of the RDOP

A Philosophy of Change and Development

For the individual, development has been expressed in terms of self actualization or in terms of the development of the individual's unique potential. (Maslow, 1970: 35-46). Ideally, the development of individual communities, societies and nations can be viewed from a similar perspective. The process involves the attempt to reach social potentials through a careful blending of the best elements within society -- human, environmental and institutional resources -- stimulated by internal and external interactions with new ideas and technology.

The inevitability of change has been generally acknowledged; "the world alters as we walk in it." (Oppenheimer, 1955: (10-11). In keeping with Bennis et al we are concerned with planned and directed change and with the idea that people can effect change in their society. Knowledge which is useful for development is knowledge of an applied nature:

> The planful application of valid and appropriate knowledge in human affairs for the purpose of creating intelligent action and change. ----- conscious, deliberate, and collaborative effort to improve the operations of the human system, social system, or cultural system, through the utilization of valid knowledge. (Bennis, 1976: 2).

Also, in accord with Bennis, (Bennis, 1976: 4) we espouse the cooperative and collaborative aspects of planned change -- collaboration between change agent and client, among clients and among change agents.

The idea of development subsumes both changes in people and in their institutions through learning. The process of "Outreach" provides opportunities for learning through the interaction, cooperation and collaboration of a variety of change agent and client systems. Mutual learning arising out of dialogue between professionals and local citizens is stressed where relations of equality are the norm and instrumental relationships avoided:

> In mutual learning, planner and client each learn from the other -- the planner from the clients' personal knowledge, the client from the planners' technical expertise. In this process, the knowledge of both undergoes a major change. A common image of the situation evolves, through dialogue. A new understanding of the possibilities for change is discovered. And in accord with this new knowledge, the client will be predisposed to act. (Friedman, 1973: 185).

Based on these and related premises, a philosophy of and specific action for "rural development outreach" is slowly evolving over time.

Rural Development

Rural development has sometimes been referred to as non-metropolitan development because it encompasses the urban villages, towns and small cities which are closely associated with the rural countryside around them as well as the agricultural, forest and recreational lands and natural open spaces. It may be defined in terms of process as well as in respect to its broad goals and objectives. It is related to a broad range of public and private activities undertaken to improve the quality of living and working in rural areas.

Activities as well as goals can be grouped in various ways. For the operation of Outreach, we at Guelph have grouped them into five catagories -- human development, economic development, environmental improvement and preservation, community facilities and coordinating activities as indicated in Figure 1. Human development casts the rural resident as the target of rural development as well as its major resource. It is associated with the health and general welfare of all age and occupational categories of rural people and with their education, training and manpower development and utilization. Economic development is viewed in terms of employment and job development in agriculture, rural industry, business and services and is concerned with supply, credit, markets and taxation as well as related informational services and research. Environmental improvement and preservation subsumes goals and activities associated with forest and natural covers, rangeland and wildlife, parks and recreation, conservation, pollution control, population dispersement and the general improvement and maintenance of the aesthetic qualities of the rural countryside. Community facilities encompasses aspects of social and physical infrastructure,

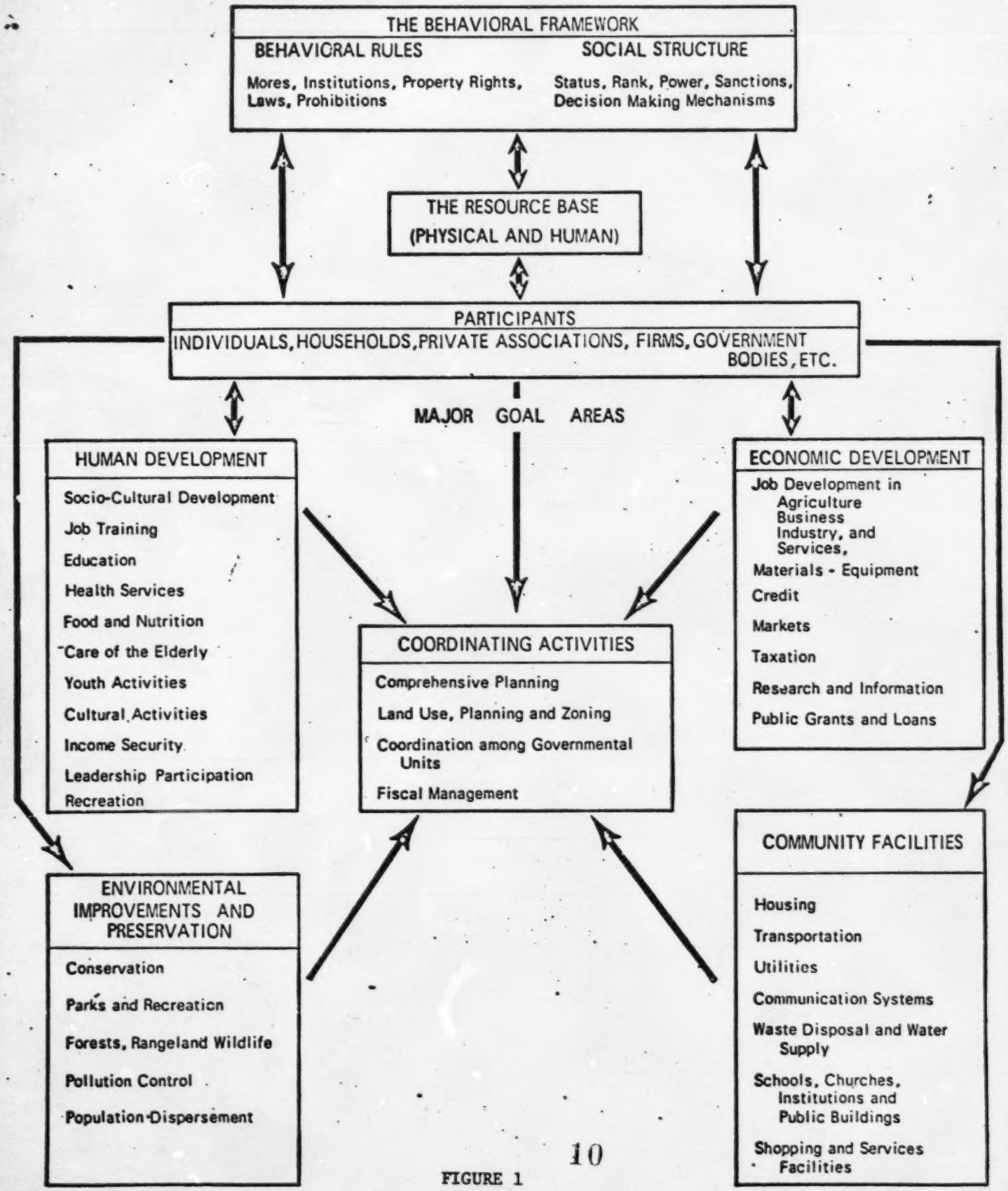

FIGURE 1

Schema fashioned by Workshop Planning Committee of D.J. Blackburn, G.L. Brinkman, E.A. Cebotarev, E.W. Findlay and W. van Vuuren, University of Guelph, January 1974. (Blackburn, 1974: V)

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including housing, transportation, utilities, communication systems, waste disposal and water supply, schools, churches, various institutional structures and public buildings, shopping services and facilities. Such coordinating activities as comprehensive planning, land use planning and zoning, fiscal management, and coordination among government units help to interrelate all of these broad areas of concern within rural development.

Philosophical Rationalization for the Development of a Rural Outreach Program

The more pervasive problems identified as justification for the development of a rural outreach program at Guelph were the persistent social and economic inequalities in rural (non-metropolitan) areas of Ontario.

Rapid technological, economic and social changes have characterized Ontario as a whole in recent decades. They have left in their wake rural communities and regions which are not only disadvantaged by comparison to more urban and metropolitan centres and regions but which are in some instances rapidly deteriorating in terms of economic and social dimensions as well as in terms of their aesthetic and physical environments.

Not only have current trends resulted in many social and economic imbalances and disparities in area development, but of equal concern, past and present inadequacies in organizational planning and programming competence have been unable to cope with massive urban-rural advances. These advances are currently threatening to divest Ontario of its agricultural heartland and to overrun and change the rural countryside, its people and their communities in ways which may in large measure be ill-advised, inappropriate and largely unplanned.

The trends which have contributed to this problem include, among others, the following:

1. Rural-urban migrations brought on in part from economic pressures stemming from greater efficiencies in agricultural production and in part from the diverse attractions or urban employment and urban life.

2. Breakdown and deterioration of rural neighborhoods and communities concomitant with changing economic, educational, religious, communication, transportation and other social institutions and systems.

3. Decrease in numbers of commercial farms and decrease in numbers employed in basic agriculture.

4. Continuing problems of transition and adjustment as evidenced by small uneconomic farm units and by farm operators with inadequate economic resources and with inadequate management training and "know-how". There is a continuing need for retraining and upgrading of rural manpower resources and for counselling and support services to enable adjustment into new ways of making a living.

5. Developing urban-rural trends as evidenced by numbers of part-time farmers and absentee owners, attraction of urbanites to country living and recreation, land speculation and urban sprawl accompanied by a lack of or inadequacy of comprehensive rural and regional planning.

The effectiveness of Ontario government policy and programs in the area of agricultural production and marketing are well recognized. Government has also sponsored a wide range of programs in the broad area of rural adjustment and regional development and has fostered a policy which lends needed support to the less developed and more disadvantaged regions of the province. But much real progress in the broad area of rural and regional development has been limited by the lack of trained planners in rural and regional development in contrast to urban planners and by a lack of coordination of activities of the many agencies, organizations and departments concerned with rural and regional development in a wide variety of aspects and dimensions.

The University of Guelph, by virture of its founding colleges of Agriculture, Veterinary Medicine and Family and Consumer Studies, has a long tradition of close working relationships with Ontario's rural communities and their people. With the added support of the new Colleges of Social, Physical and Biological Sciences, as well as the College of Arts, the university is in a still stronger position to democratize its educational and research functions to address the more complex, broad ranging and interrelated problems requiring attention by the rural areas of Ontario today.

But if the university were to meet the prevailing challenge posed by the complex problems of rural and regional development in Ontario a mechanism had to be established which made it possible to do so effectively in harmony with the goals and objectives of the Ontario people and their government and in close cooperation with both private and government agencies and organizations.

Scope of the Program as seen initially

The proposed program was conceived as an on-going, flexible, university-wide structure that would facilitate, legitimize and integrate university effort within its declared objectives to "take leadership in the prediction and evaluation of social change and development in anticipation of future problems" as well as its objective of "making its resources available to the community at large".[1]

Initially, the program was to be administered within the Office for Continuing Education and would provide a mechanism whereby the various colleges, schools and departments, individual faculty members or groups would be enabled to make contributions to theory and practice relevant to rural and regional development.

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[1] Aims and Objectives of the University, Committee on Academic Priorities, University of Guelph, September, 1972, p. 3.

The general objective of the program would be to improve the effectiveness of rural and regional development endeavours in Ontario. The specific functions and/or roles proposed for the program were:

1. An outreach program which would function to foster ongoing communication and co-ordination at various levels -- Local municipalities, regional and provincial -- between government and citizen organizations which are concerned with rural and regional development.

   Specific programs envisaged included the institutionalization of rural community forums of similar format to the earlier very successful farm forums utilizing all appropriate media, as well as community workshops and innovative methods of training leaders for decision-making and action.

2. An information exchange and academic certification program to train and upgrade personnel for working within rural and regional development. This program would be directed toward the development of local community leadership as well as leadership within government and would include:
   (a) short training courses for rural development personnel
   (b) workshops for government agency officials at various levels, and (c) workshops for local citizens and interest groups.

3. Continuing evaluation and exploratory research in respect to rural and regional development programs. This would include action and evaluative research relating to on-going programs as well as research related to policy decision-making in respect to rural and regional development problems.

4. An interdisciplinary, problem-oriented coordinating function across college and agency boundaries where such were required in respect to research and action programs of a multi-disciplinary, multi-faceted nature. This would be in the form of information exchange, cooperative or team activity and research through cooptive, or dual appointment mechanisms of an ad hoc temporary or continuing nature as the case might be.

5. A maintenance and developmental function for purposes of ensuring continuing support for the project. This would include provision of funding from provincial, federal and private foundation sources, as well as the facilitation of the project through provision of office and operating facilities essential materials and services, and appropriate administrative and liaison personnel.

The Substantive Program Emphases as Envisaged

The substantive program emphases were to have the common goal of advancing rural-regional development and the betterment of the "quality of life and would subsume the following four interrelated areas:

1. Exploration and evolvement of appropriate decision-making mechanisms and processes for rural and regional development.

   The development of appropriately flexible and effective structures at the local level is of particular importance since it is at this level that recommendations in respect to areas 2, 3 and 4 (below) are integrated into rural-regional plans. Specific contributions to this part of the program could be made by the departments of political studies and sociology and anthropology in the College of Social Sciences and by the School of Agricultural Economics and Extension Education of the Ontario Agricultural College, for example.

   Training programs in (a) public administration, (b) communication-coordination, (c) organization, (d) leadership development, (e) group dynamics (f) attitude survey techniques, etc. would be directed toward such target groups as:

   i) Local, regional and provincial government and public agency personnel,

   ii) Development-related agencies and organizations of all types,

   iii) Community leaders and citizens at large

2. Rural-regional economic and physical development. Here the target population would be the same as in (1) (above) but training, instead of dealing with how to set up responsive development mechanisms, would deal with the physical and economic resource aspects of development. The Ontario Agricultural College -- Land Resource Science, Engineering, Agricultural economics, etc. -- and the Ontario Veterinary College could make major contributions in this area along with contributions from other university sectors. Specific program might include: (a) regional resource development (b) agriculture and related industries, (c) marketings, (d) land use planning, (e) the physical planning of housing, highways, etc.

3. Socio-cultural dimensions of development. Programs in this area would deal with the less tangible aspects of "quality of life" under two areas of emphases: (a) Improvement of the availability, delivery and use of public services; (b) Improvement of socio-cultural aspects of family and community life.

   The College of Family and Consumer Studies and the College of Arts were expected to make their largest contributions within this program area along with other sectors of the university.

4. Preservation of the natural environment. Programs in the areas of conservation and recreational resources, land use and open space design, wild life, forestry as ell as all aspects of land, water and air, pollution, would fall withing this program sector. The College of Biological Science and the Ontario Agricultural College - Landscape Architecture, Environmental Sciences -- might be expected to make major contributions here.

Perceived Organizational Structure, Process, and Facilities

A steering committee comprising appropriate representatives from the Ontario and Federal governments, local municipalities and rural communities, private agencies and associations concerned with rural and regional development, as well as from the university community was seen to be essential. The steering committee would be called upon to guide the planning and organizing of the project in its early stages of development including the establishment of appropriate policy-making and administrative stuctures and interest group representation and an appropriate governing constitution and policy statement.

While application was made to the Kellogg Foundation for initial funding, it was recognized that alternative continuous funding arrangements would need to be established at an early date. Additional funding might also be required for the provision of facilities as well as for related research support. Participating Colleges and their various Schools and Departments would be required to maintain responsibility for related research - - basic, evaluative and policy - - within their particular areas of competence while there would be a general coordinating administrative function with respect to research which is of an inter-disciplinary nature.

Early Development and Implementation

The RDOP was created at the University of Guelph effectively on May 1 of 1976. Financial assistance for this innovative project was provided by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (Battle Creek, Michigan) for an initial period of four years. Subsequently, support was extended for an additional three-year period. The funds were granted to facilitate the development of an institutional mechanism by means of which the University of Guelph could engage creatively and effectively in various innovative rural development activities in rural Ontario and in the exploration and development of new approaches in this field (U of G Proposal, 1975:6 - 9).

The University of Guelph was considered an optimal place for the initiation of an integrated rural development program in Canada because of the University's long standing association with farm people through the teaching, research and extension activities in agriculture, veterinary medicine and family and comsumer studies in particular. However, the very fact of this long-standing experience had established in the minds of many people in rural areas and many a member of the university community, a definite set of expectations of what the rural development activities are and would be, both on campus and in the rural setting.

The initial task of the Project was the establishment of a presence, first, within the university itself and, subsequently, within the rural community. Because the Outreach Project represented a new mode of community-university interaction which was broadly focused on concepts of a comprehensive and integrated rural development -- in contradistinction to existing single

element extension programs represented by agricultural, home economics and other Government extension services -- there existed, initially, a very considerable public relations requirement.

The idea of Outreach as an educational, inquiring, decision-making, facilitating and future oriented process, conducted jointly by university and rural community members, was new. The RDOP espoused a policy of "non-directiveness" in the selection of specific projects; it fostered inter and transdisciplinary cooperation in project development, implementation and related action research and evaluation; and it encouraged a philosophy of community self-determination and "empowerment" attempting to ensure that all segments of the rural community were involved at each stage.

The fact that the intermediate outcomes of this process would provide the specific project and action goals -- and could not be determined in advance -- was alien to many of the RDOP participants, accustomed to a more expert-specialist based and unilateral diagnostic mode of operation. This, so called "process" approach, not always recognized outside of the social sciences, contributed to an image of RDOP that seemed, at times, to be diffused and focusless.

The Internal Organization

Following project approval, the RDOP office was established outside of the existing colleges, schools and centres of the university and reporting directly to the Vice-President, Academic. To guide the RDOP, a working committee was structured to help clarify terms of reference and to establish procedures for getting the project under way. The committee was composed of individuals who had been active in the development of the initial proposal as well as representatives of colleges and other key persons. As new committees were structured to serve specific needs, the working committee was phased out

with many of its functions being subsumed within the Research and Evaluation and Executive Committees. Subsequently, a separate College Representative's Committee was established as well as an Advisory Board.

The college representatives were intended to serve as a means for two-way communication between the RDOP and the University faculty within traditional and applied disciplines, as well as to take an active part in RDOP decision-making processes both on and off campus. Since this "process" involvement proved to be alien and frustrating to some members of this group, there was a loss of interest on the part of some members and subsequent drop-out -- particularly among those lacking some social science orientation.

For those on campus with an association with agricultural and agri-business extension, the Outreach function of RDOP appeared to question and threaten the established protocol. The relationship of the broadly-based, comprehensive and integrated rural development outreach program to the traditional single-element extension functions was either not clearly appreciated or accepted by all. Since the committee was thought not to function to serve its original objective of fostering communication between RDOP and the University community and the enhansement of a broadly-based faculty involvement in the project it was abandoned in 1979 in favour of a more select executive group working closely with the Director. But Colleges still maintained representation on the Advisory Board.

The Advisory Board was composed of individuals both internal and external to the University. Its primary purpose was to advise the RDOP on general policy and also to link it with the larger community -- Federal, Provincial and Local governments, and rural citizens -- such that the key actors in the process of rural development had a forum in which to address rural issues.

The External Organization

The initial project proposal committed the RDOP to the selection of two pilot counties in which to concentrate its activities. The two pilot areas were to represent contrasting characteristics; one was to be rural-traditional and largely agricultural with minimal urban encroachment; the other was to be characterized by extensive urban intrusion into the rural countryside. The selection of the two areas was the result of a broad-based data collection from a range of existing sources with some initial on-site exploration on the part of RDOP staff followed by a selection process based on a set of selection criteria devised by the working committee. (RDOP Research Reports, 1977). The two counties selected were Huron -- representing the rural-traditional area -- and Halton -- adjacent to Metropolitan Toronto and experiencing extensive overspill.

During the process of pilot area selection a series of workshops were conducted , some at Guelph and some in rural communities, in part to familiarize RDOP with the problems and needs as perceived by rural people and, in part, to begin to familiarize rural people with the RDOP project; a two-way exchange was hoped for and achieved. The series included seven workshops followed by a summary workshop with the following interest groups represented -- farm operators, rural business people, professional and public serve people, rural youth, rural women, and the rural elderly. Problems identified were those associated with rural land use, issues associated with community decline, and the roles of government and education in rural areas and the need for greater participation by rural people in decision-making processes that affect them. (Fuller and Stan: 1977).

The Huron Pilot Area

Huron county is essentially an agricultural county on the shores of Lake Huron. While it is for the most part progressive a portion of the county does qualify for special assistance under the criteria set by the Federal Department of Regional Economic Expansion. It is situated within daily commuting distance from the University of Guelph.

A separate Huron county committee was formed comprising University faculty and staff who had an interest in working with the Huron community, RDOP staff members, and officials from the Huron county planning office. Officials of the respective county planning offices served as key facilitators in the entry process in each of the two pilot areas. Some time later representatives of three local township councils would be asked to serve on this committee as well as coordinators of the various projects during the periods when they were active. In this way the Huron county committee structure is said to have "evolved" gradually over time from one dominated by University representatives to one with increasing local community representation.

While early activity was to some degree influenced by the particular interests of University personnel, an early project was one referred to as the Data Base Study which served to collect data which would provide information useful in defining the existing situation in Huron as well as helping to define needs as seen by the community. The project also served as an early public relations function to help familiarize the local people with the RDOP project. A field office was acquired where those participating in the household survey lived while in the field, largely university students,

during the summer of 1977 . During this period intensive activity served to keep the local community aware of the Project. There were newspaper articles, radio interviews and workshops to support the activities of the survey crew who were actively making themselves known in the community. Data derived from this initial study were later analysed and made available for subsequent activities.

An early project consisted of a survey of existing drainage networks in selected townships in the county which met an identified need as a basis on which to project subsequent drainage plans. This was undertaken by University of Guelph students in the Centre of Resources under the guidance of its Director. (CRD publication No.87, 1978) A project undertaken by staff and students in the History Department of the University met a local community interest in recording local history. This has involved working with the local museum, files of local newspapers, county and regional libraries and interviews with key local citizens as well as working with local volunteers including the Seniors in the area. As a result, papers have been prepared on the history of family life, craftsmen, education and literacy, and the development of agriculture. Several Master's theses are serving to document phenomenon evident in Huron at the end of the century; and a book is in progress. A slide tape production recorded rural issues and concerns at the turn of the century and how they were handled, as lessons for today. The University of Guelph library acquired newspaper collections from three of the older communities in the county -- Clinton, Wingham, and Seaforth. Local newspaper articles served to keep the community abreast of progress.

As the Huron Project progressed a program surrounding the needs of Seniors in the community attained priority. (RDOP Research paper: 1978) In addition to the History project, other projects centred around their needs for transportation, Housing and a Senior's day centre as well as the quality of life for the senior citizen in the area. A survey to assess transportation needs in Huron was undertaken cooperatively by the RDOP, Transport Canada, The Provincial Department of Transportation and Communication, Huron Council and the local Community Services Council. A local team of interviewers was trained by the University and supervised by the community. Results were analysed by the University. County-wide services were assessed; home-bound seniors were identified with a view to assessing their transportation needs and with a view to involving them in a Day centre; options were explored in respect to bus improvement and the development of a new transportation system. There was public feedback of results through local councils, newspaper articles, television programming and through public meetings. Information was shared at three conferences; a paper was disseminated through Transport Canada, (Armstrong & Fuller: 1979, a & b) and an Information Manual was prepared on: How to go about developing a local transportation service. A slide tape was prepared on transportation in a rural area and a document prepared on the existing volunteer-driver-rider system. As a part of the process an advisory committee was set up to facilitate community solution-seeking and community group formation.

In response to a community request for assistance in designing a Day Centre for Seniors a community committee was established to design and establish a Centre. The RDOP played a facilitating role in helping the community in self organization, assisting in proposal development and in

matching government funding bodies to community needs. A Day Centre has been established and follow-up activities have concerned its evaluation, the development of policy recommendations, and the development of a manual on: How to go about setting up a Day Centre for Seniors.

A project designed to explore and help foster public participation in land use planning was undertaken in cooperation with the Huron county planning department and in association with the secondary planning process -- interrelating township plans with the official county plan. The process was first observed in selected townships and a program designed to facilitate greater individual input in the process. As a part of this process a series of small "kitchen" meetings were held to inform individuals about relevant issues and so enable them to make meaningful input during the larger public meetings. A packet of material has been prepared to facilitate future participation. A survey of agricultural lands in the county in relation to its capability for agriculture and its ownership is in progress. Other projects, including those related to nutrition, parenting, and financial planning have been pursued.

The Halton Pilot Area

Halton county is East of Guelph and West of Mississauga Regional Municipality and Metropolitan Toronto. The southern portion of the Regional Municipality of Halton is largely urban comprising the communities of Oakville and Burlington which border the northern shores of Lake Ontario. Rural Halton, then, consists of the more northerly sections of the Regional Municipality. It contains the small urban communities of Milton, Acton and Georgetown which are closely linked to the rural countryside. It contains a sizeable farming community -- largely dairy farming -- which is threatened by

urban intrusions of various sorts. The Region is bisected by the Niagara Escarpment and the conservation and protected areas associated with the escarpment as well as by the Parkway Belt which serves to provide a utility corridor and at the same time provide an open space separation between the lakeshore urban communities and a northern tier of urban municipalities stretching out from Metropolitan Toronto.

A separate Halton Committee of RDOP was created to plan the initiation of activities in the area. This committee comprised RDOP staff, University faculty, a representative of the Halton Planning office and a representative of the Regional Council of the Municipality of Halton. In Contradistinction to the Huron pilot area it was decided to create a local coordinating group within the area as early as possible to take responsibility for the determination of priorities within rural development in Halton and to foster the formation of task groups to develop and execute projects in specific subject matter areas of concern to the rural community.

To achieve the formation of the coordinating group, a series of workshops was structured to introduce the concepts of comprehensive and integrated rural development to Halton citizens, to identify problems and needs in rural Halton as seen by the rural people, to identify resource people interested in working with the project either on an intensive basis or for short periods in association with task groups, to identify criteria for the selection of members of a Halton coordinating committee, and to facilitate the structuring of a procedure for selecting membership into Halton coordinating committee. Feedback of results was disseminated to all participants as the process continued. The workshops were carried out in a two-phase series at the conclusion of which a working committee of some twenty individuals who were recommended and had expressed interest was appointed. This group then finalized the creation of the coordinating group which came

to be known as the Halton Community Pulse Group. Because of the deliberate structured nature of the selection process for this group, the Halton Process is referred to as the Halton Community "structured" process in contradistinction to the Huron "evolutionary" process.

The Halton Community Pulse Group, finally structured, comprised fourteen individuals from across the rural area, representing a cross-section of farm and non-farm interests, professionals, men, women, young people, and others committed to the good future of Halton. Unlike the Huron experience, the Halton Community Pulse Group (CPG) was from the onset a community based group with only two university representatives on it. Its early meetings resulted in a focussing on the stress associated with rural living and a desire to realistically portray the realities of rural life in a tabloid form. This was considered one way of reducing the conflict and tension which results for newcomers moving into the area and also some of the difficulties experienced by long-established residents as a result of urban expansion. The Rural Living Task Group fully utilized community resources in information-gathering and production as well as university design resources and faculty with specific interests in rural fringe issues. The result: a well-received tabloid production entitled "Ruralities".

Other facets of stress in rural living are being explored. Student papers on women isolated in rural settings have been completed. An audio-tape of interviews with women living in rural areas to ascertain their views of life in a rural environment and the decision-making processes which resulted in such a relocation, is available. Presently being explored are the perceptions of the service delivery sector in relation to women in

a rural area and the problems they experience and perceive. Faculty advisors and students are working together on this exploration in cooperation with the community group.

Stress for the farming community is very evident in a rural-urban fringe area. The future of farming in Halton is being tackled on several fronts. A team of students is presently completing an agricultural audit at the request of a subcommittee of the Agricultural Advisory Committee and the Halton Community Pulse Group. Supervision by agriculturally oriented faculty will enable the provision of current and accurate date as a base for future planning and the exploration of alternatives to retain agricultural land in agricultural use. A more thorough investigation of the agricultural productivity of land in the rural-urban fringe is in progress. Faculty, students and the agricultural producers are cooperating to fully understand the present situation as it relates to agriculture in the area, but with an eye to how this information can point to areas requiring future attention and effort.

The loss of a sense of community is a stress for those who've experienced Halton in its earlier days as well as for those who move to Halton, expecting to find the mythical neighborliness of the country. In an attempt to redress this, a community task group is working to record the history of some of the small villages and hamlets in the area. Local community historians together with a history professor are directing the work of university studetns as they record on tape interviews with long-time residents in the hope of producing slide tapes which will portray the history of selected communites. These will be used locally by the school board, historical societies, and museums, to increase awareness of local history and heritage.

Like Huron, Halton too has a rich assortment of cooperative and collaborative projects underway. These also address the implications of migration into the area, the loss of agricultural land, the energy situation, and major rural trends.

As originally conceived, the general objective of the program is being addressed -- improving the effectiveness of rural and regional development endeavours. The Outreach program is fostering ongoing communication and coordination at various levels. Community workshops and appropriate media are being utilized to debate, make decisions, and then take action. The university is contributing to exploratory research and evaluation in collaboration with the community such that programs and policy recommendations contribute to rural and regional development.

Project endeavours have themselves been rich and varied. However, the level of interdisciplinarity originally sought has fallen short of its goals. Projects themselves have by and large not enable

The substantive program emphases originally conceived were the development of training programs in public administration, communication, coordination, organization, leadership development, group dynamics, attitude survey techniques, etc. Although these have not been actualized, community structures in each pilot area have developed and have been exposed formally, and more often informally, to some of the areas noted above. Certainly the projects tackled have addressed in varying degrees regional economic and physical development, the preservation of the natural environment, and the socio-cultural dimensions of these. As an educational, facilitating, and future oriented process, Outreach has had a significant impact in the rural community. An empowered community group, particularly in Halton, is attempting to ensure that all segments of the rural community are involved in the problem-solving process.

Expansion into Northern Ontario

In addition to the primary emphases in the pilot areas of Huron and Halton, a request for assistance in assessing the situation as it relates to the provision of water and sewage treatment for the island of Moose Factory, came from the Moose Factory Band and the federal Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. Moose Factory Island is situated in Lower James Bay in Northern Ontario's Hudson's Bay. Three major political jurisdictions -- federal reserve (900 pop.), federal institutional area (200 pop.), and non-reserve or provincial (500 pop.), -- divide the island and its population of 1600. Saucer-shaped, the island has a very high water table and, given its northern situation, frost, which leaves the ground for only a few months. These factors make the provision of potable water and sewage treatment truly a difficulty. In addition to assessing the situation, an action plan for the provision of water and sewage was to be developed. (Wolfe: 1979).

In order to determine whether it would be possible for the project to handle distant inquiries and rural development projects, and also to learn more about northern Ontario and some of the rural development issues, a decision was made to pursue and commit the Project to this opportunity. To address this project, an interdisciplinary team comprised of faculty from Land Resource Science, Engineering, Geography, Agricultural Extension, Landscape Architecture, and Sociology/Anthropology, undertook to review the documentation in relation to the project. Some members met with the band and council on Moose Factory Island to determine their needs and requirements in relation to water and sewage. In addition, a faculty chairperson undertook to talk to the federal Department of Health and

Welfare Canada which runs a hospital compound on the island. An unorganized section of the island was also involved in the discussions. All appropriate ministries from the provincial and federal levels -- 18 in all, became involved.

RDOP played a key role in bringing all the ministry representatives together, a feat which had previously been unaccomplished. Some preliminary agreements to proceed with a plan of action were also arranged. This short-term project, utilizing a faculty advisory team, was assisted by two coordinators -- one based on campus, and one based in Moosonee across from Moose Factory Island. They carried out the actual work of the committee, an arrangement which worked very well. In addition, a four-month commitment of faculty time in an advisory capacity also seemed to be an excellent arrangement.

Given the project's mandate to determine how a contemporary university can best outreach to its hinterlands, it was felt appropriate that in Phase II the RDOP seek an educational institution in Northern Ontario which would be interested in outreaching to its neighbouring areas and assist that institution in such an activity.

To date, the University of Guelph has been operating in the rich region of southwestern Ontario and the challenge of a more complicated area with many economic, natural, and human problems is a more realistic testing of the concept of Outreach. In Phase II then, the RDOP will undertake to learn more about the rural development issues in Northeastern and Northwestern Ontario, and will identify a northern sister institution with which to begin one or two demonstration projects in rural development outreach.

Benefits, Constraints, Projections

The major rural development projects in each pilot area have drawn faculty and students from extension education, land resource science, geography, sociology, psychology, landscape architecture, philosophy, and family and consumer studies. In all, 57 faculty members participated in RDOP on "Outreach" activities in various capacities and for different spans of time.

Over the next three years, as programs continue, there will be concern for the phase-out of the RDOP as now structured and for the development of alternative continuing mechanisms both within the university and within the pilot communities. The need for continuing formal and informal relations with local government at the township, county and regional levels will need to be addressed.

Benefits

The participation in RDOP activities has yielded as yet unrecognized benefits for the university. Disciplines which would normally not come together, were joined in critical dialogue. A broader concept of rural development is now more widely discussed across the university. Rural courses are being enriched with RDOP findings and experiences. "Outreach" activities offer graduate and undergraduate students first hand experience in research and action in rural settings. In the traditional sphere of academic work, "Outreach" has offered new foci for research and support for carrying them out, as well as opportunities for the testing of research tools. The outlooks and structure of rural communities and of native groups are now better understood, as well as the philosophies and operating modes of local, provincial and federal agencies.

In general, new communication, action and research skills (such as participatory research) are being slowly but surely acquired, enlarging the "knowledge generating" capabilities of the university.

Yet, so far this has been mainly the result of personal commitments of individual faculty. The willingness to engage in "Outreach" is, presently a very personal choice of faculty members, a decision of taking on work and responsibilities beyond one's normal "call of duty" yielding little institutional rewards.

These university members have worked with rural citizens to explore and understand issues, and develop action plans to bring about changes. To this end, outreach has taken hold for community and university.

Constraints

Though successful, Outreach activities had to surmount considerable constraints. Perhaps the most difficult to overcome were those posed by the academic orientation and institutional structure.

The first point of difficulty was that "Outreach" represented a rural development or "process" activity, which in a very real sense is expected to involve education, communication, consultation, research and organization for decision-making and action, conducted jointly by the university and the rural community, with the purpose of formulating rural development and action goals, involveing skills not normally possessed by academics. Research, consultation and education are perhaps the only ones with which the academics are familiar.

But even research, in order to contribute to the "Outreach" process, needs of necessity, contain at least a measure of an applied orientation. Applied research, on the whole, is not highly valued by the academic

community. Peer and reference group pressure, however, has been shown to be a powerful influence on university faculty's involvement in "Outreach" types of activities (Lionberger and Anji Reddy, 1976: 25-44). The lack of an "on-campus", recognized reference group for non-conventional activities was (and is) a considerable impediment for greater faculty involvement in "Outreach" work, since the evaluations of these activities by one's academic peers is, on the whole, negative.

The interdisciplinary, collaborative aspect of "Outreach" work presented another area of difficulties for cooperating faculty members.

In our "Outreach" experience, the definite mode of interdisciplinary integration was of the monodisciplinary type, with the social sciences playing a predominant role, especially those representing disciplinary departments.[1] This resulted in alientation of physical and natural scientists. Some valuable time was also lost on not too fruitful discussions on the roles of the natural and the social sciences in "Outreach", and whether "Outreach" was a duplication of already existing programs, rather than seizing the opportunity offered by this "open" project to explore new ways of university/rural community interaction, outside of the limits of the existing programs.

The professional constraints on "Outreach" work discussed in the previous section are closely related to the institutional arrangement and structures (departments, schools, colleges) in which faculty members work. Under the present administrative structure, a faculty member owes primary allegience and accountability for his work to his/her academic department.

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1. This is in contrast to the multidisciplinary social science departments, such as Family Studies, or Extension Education, for example.

For most colleges of this university, "Outreach" activities are only marginally recognized in faculty assessments and are not a formal part of his/her duties.[1] This, in spite of the Academic Vice-President's recommendation to this effect.

All faculty activities are evaluated by the same academic assessment committees, composed of academically committed faculty, which assign lower ratings to applied, interdisciplinary and multi-authored research activities, papers and reports, than to "pure", "scientific" and single authored work.

No wonder that faculty members, more often than not, see "Outreach" involvement as contributing little to their career developments, or perhaps even having negative effects on their departmental standing. Under the circumstances, it is quite surprising to see the number of faculty members that the RDOP was able to attract. The RDOP's task was not an easy one and the university is slow in responding in positive ways to these outreach requirements.

While in the past few years it would appear to have been premature to press for administrative changes, which would make "Outreach" a legitimate function recognized as useful and productive across the university, it is not premature to ask for the creation of a formal, professional group on campus for guiding "Outreach" work. This reference group could serve as back-up for faculty activities, systematize procedure, and produce evaluative criteria for various aspects of "Outreach" work, replacing the arbitrariness by which the bulk of this work is presently judged.[2] It could serve as a sounding board for new approaches, as well as acting as a peer group, giving moral support and encouragement for those committed to this type of work.

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1. Exceptions are the older colleges (O.A.C., O.V.C., FACS) which have historic relationships of a contractual nature with government, for extension type activities.

2. Though flexibility is a requirment in these activities, some systematization of procedures could greatly improve this procedure.

In conclusion, both structural and professional factors limit the scope of "Outreach" at the University of Guelph "Outreach" program enters its second Phase.

Projections

In the second phase of this University of Guelph innovation, initial steps will be taken to "Outreach" to Northern Ontario in partnership with other educational institutions. Yet, an expanded "Outreach" program to support rural development will require increased commitment from the university in particular and from the government as well. Structural constraints within both these institutions will have to be removed to permit an expansion of "Outreach". For this, government is seen as playing a key role, particularly as a funding agency to support university "Outreach". A particular partnership of community, university, and government to address a water servicing and sewage system for native peoples, though brief, has demonstrated that government can recognize the objective role which a university can play as other key actors plan for rural betterment.

It appears mandatory for further "Outreach" support and expansion, that both government agencies and university administration recognize, as have some of the applied social scientists, that "Outreach" activities may represent real tests for rural development policies and programs, thereby becoming an indispensable part of knowledge and policy formation (Schon, 1979: 628:97). For the field of applied social psychology, where structural constraints and individual action intersect, the value of the "social (field) experiment" is seen as a basic link between social research and social policy (Saxe and Fine, 1980: 84). In the area of organization

change a similar expansion of university research is urged by rural sociologists (Sower, 1976: 7-24). In both areas new roles for academics are called for;

> Rather than being independent researchers in academic settings the new role descriptions necessary for problem based research require that (the social scientist) collaborate with a variety of individuals. Implicity in[1] ... the above role descriptions for social psychologists is the collaboration between social psychologists, policy-makers and others in the social science community.
>
> (Saxe and Fine, 1980: 85)

If one adds to this the participatory norm of rural development, which includes the ordinary citizen into its design, we clearly move into the broad area of "useful social knowldge" generation. The generation of "socially useful knowledge" becomes a crucial function for university survival, in publicly supported institutions, especially in times of financial constraints.[2] At the University of Guelph, the RDOP with its "Outreach" progran is a mechanism for expanding university capabilities in this direction. It might, in the long run, extend the university's credibility in the broader rural community and help to secure the needed support for basic, technological and "Outreach" work of the institution.

An expanded "Outreach" function would also require a redefinition and refinement of the role the community would play. A better understanding

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1. This is in contrast to the multidisciplinary social science departments, such as Family Studies, or Extension Education, for example.

2. In reflecting on this problem Daniel says: "How can one ask the public to provide support, much less facilities, for the intellectural gratification of one select group? A part of the answer, of curse, is simply that one cannot. As long as a group is dependent on public support it must seek some means of contact with the values of the enveloping society ..." (1967: 1205). "Outreach" is this type of activity, which brings rural concerns and values to the attention of the academic world.

of the differing contexts of rural communities and of differing responses required of the university must be developed so that the expanded "Outreach" would be sensitive to the need of all concerned.

Let us hope that "Outreach" can be recognized for the benefits it can provide to the rural and the university communities and that it can be organized so as to become a normal university function.

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